Middle East, opening a new gateway to the ideas and the commodities of China and India. The new inhabitants of western Europe had little knowledge of, or interest in, what lay beyond their own borders: and it was natural for the Jews to step into the breach, in the role of intermediaries. Thus they contributed largely to the process by which the harshness of the Dark Ages was modified, and various refinements of life—later to be considered necessities—were introduced to the countries of the bleak north. According to one authority[1]

" Europe owes to the Jewish Radanites the introduction of oranges and apricots, sugar and rice, Jargonelle pears, and Gueldre roses, senna and borax, bdellium and asafoetida, sandal-wood and aloes, cinnamon and galingale, mace and camphor, candy and julep, cubebs and tamarinds, slippers and tambours, mattresses, sofa, and calabash, musk and jujube, jasmine and lilac. There is also evidence that some of the more important items of foreign trade came in with the Radanites, as was perhaps natural. Thus the word 'douane', for custom house, 'tariff', 'bazaar', 'bale', 'fondac' or factory, and 'baggage', all occur early, as well as barge[3],[c] barque', and 'sloop' (Lammens). There is also probability that the royal breed of horses in France known as limousin, introduced in the ninth century, was due to these Jewish merchants. . . . "

Yet more can be added to this list. The Jews are a people "endowed by divine grace with

special aptitude for handicrafts," wrote Cosmas Indicopleustes in the sixth century; and, so long as Christian intolerance permitted, it was as artisans rather than capitalists that they were distinguished. Various branches of manufacture were associated with them almost exclusively.

In the early centuries of the Christian era—and for long

[1] **Jacobs, *op.* c&., pp. 203-4.**